

fully and completely. As they do, I believe they will ensure that the decision made by the Secretary of State was the right one.

So for these reasons, I would like to commend once again the Secretary of State. I would like to commend the Lebanese Government and the people of Lebanon. I would like to urge our colleagues to keep their eye on Lebanon and to look for other ways by which we can build a strong relationship.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

PERMITTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FULL ACCESS TO THE SENATE FLOOR

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I take the floor tonight to discuss a resolution that I have introduced with Senator WARNER to permit individuals with disabilities full access to the floor of the U.S. Senate. I believe that this resolution will be approved later tonight and has been reviewed by both the majority and the minority. I anticipate that it will be incorporated into the final business of the U.S. Senate during the wrap-up session before the session formally concludes.

Mr. President, this resolution that I offer tonight will close the book on discrimination against individuals with disabilities on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Earlier this year, after a visually impaired professional on my staff was barred from bringing her guide dog onto the floor, the Senate adopted a resolution providing for temporary case-by-case entry to the floor for those professionals with disabilities. This was a good step—an important step. But it still left some room for discrimination.

The resolution that will be considered by the Senate tonight will ensure that as a matter of formal Senate rule there is no discrimination permitted against individuals with disabilities. There will no longer be a double standard in the U.S. Senate. Senate staffers with disabilities who have the privilege of the Senate floor will be permitted to bring onto the Senate floor supporting aids and services such as canes, service dogs, interpreters, or assistive devices.

This is an important day for the Senate, for people with disabilities, and for our whole country because it makes clear that the U.S. Congress ought to follow the laws that apply to everyone else in our country.

I especially want, Mr. President, to recognize the hard work of the chairman of the Rules Committee, Senator JOHN WARNER, in moving this resolution forward. As every Member of this body knows, he has an enormous workload. He was extremely gracious to me in working to develop this resolution and gain bipartisan support for it.

I would also like to pay a special tribute to the senior Senator from the

State of West Virginia, Senator BYRD, whose expert knowledge of the Senate rules was of enormous benefit in drafting this new resolution.

As a relatively new Senator, I have great esteem for the constant care which Senator BYRD uses to guard the traditions and prerogatives of this body. I am of the view that every U.S. Senator owes a debt of gratitude to the Senator from West Virginia for his constant vigilance with respect to ensuring the rights of all on the Senate floor.

Mr. President, this is an important resolution. It is justice long overdue. Earlier this year, a congressional fellow in my office was denied access to the Senate floor because she uses a guide dog. That guide dog is a working dog; a guide dog that serves as the eyes for a visually impaired person. The people of this country were offended, and they sent a message that this type of discrimination is unacceptable to them.

My office, like many others in the U.S. Senate, were inundated with calls, mail, and e-mail.

There was one letter I received that recounted a bit of history that I would like to briefly share.

The letter that was sent to me told a story about the Senate in the 1930s when there were some Members who disapproved of a guide dog coming onto the Senate floor. The individual then who needed the assistance of the guide dog was Senator Schall of Minnesota. The letter described the Senator's first entry into the Chamber with his guide dog and how the other Senators rose, one by one, and then in large numbers applauded him. The Senate galleries followed suit until the whole Senate was just one gigantic standing ovation.

The letter goes on to say that Senator Schall stopped by his seat, turned and listened to the ovation from all around him and was touched as the ovation continued and continued. Waving to the crowd, the Senator took his seat and commanded his guide dog, Lux, to lie down. The guide dog then curled up under the Senator's desk, tucking his body so it would not be in the way of any Senator who passed by. The May 22, 1933, issue of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD documents how strongly the American public reacted to the news of the death of Senator Schall's guide dog. The guide dog died after being separated a few days from the Senator when he thought it would be inappropriate to take the dog with him to attend the funeral of another Senator. Senator Schall said then:

Mr. President, since the death of my good dog, Lux, last March, the mails of this and other countries have brought me hundreds of letters of regret. So many expressions of interest have gladdened and surprised me.

It seems to me that the action that the Senate will take shortly makes it clear that we have not forgotten how important it is to stand for the principle of equal justice in this Chamber. What we do each day is set an example,

and here particularly an important example, because as a result of the Americans With Disabilities Act, the Congressional Accountability Act, and other statutes, we make clear that the laws of the United States are going to apply in this Chamber.

As a result of this resolution, and particularly the extremely helpful work that Senator WARNER and Senator BYRD have done, it is going to be possible to have a formal Senate rule that ensures that discrimination against individuals with disabilities is not going to be tolerated on this floor.

This rule takes the generally accepted definition of an individual with a disability, defined as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual, and says it is not possible to discriminate against that individual in this Chamber.

In closing, Mr. President, I want to observe that there are 49 million Americans with a disabilities. Under the law, they are guaranteed the same rights as all other Americans in terms of access to jobs, insurance, transportation, and telecommunications technology. They are not guaranteed special treatment. They are guaranteed just equal access. That is what this resolution is all about, equal access.

Finally, Mr. President, many lessons have been learned from this experience. I believe that the Senate and our country are more aware and sensitive to the many issues facing individuals with disabilities. We have seen that rules can and should be updated to meet the changing needs of our society. I believe that the Senate and our country as a whole are better off as a result of the consideration of this resolution and the strong bipartisan support that has developed here and in our country.

Mr. President, I think this is an important day for the Senate, a good day for the Senate, because it was a day which ensures that our country is a bit more fair, a bit more sensitive to the needs of those with disabilities. I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have helped me so much, particularly Senators WARNER and BYRD.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators BYRD, REID, KERRY, CHAFEE, AKAKA, KENNEDY, MURRAY, BINGAMAN, MURKOWSKI, FEINGOLD, HATCH, DURBIN, and HARKIN be added as cosponsors.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONDEMNATION OF JERUSALEM BOMBING

Mr. REED. Mr. President, yesterday, while thousands of innocent men, women and children shopped in Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem, the peace of that sunny afternoon was shattered when two bombs filled with screws and nails detonated. Fifteen people were killed, close to 200 persons